A story of cruelty

I don’t know
so let me begin
this history of cruelty
will be long
and for some
rapturous in places
        less so for others
not celebrating
        but giving
a stage to imagine
peopled by the aware and the unconscious

nature, out there, is rudely efficient.
In here as well
every swelling in and on your body
attests

Microorganisms go at it
from virus to amoeba to
bacteria of every dimension
submicroscopic up to the
        Thiomargarita magnifica
a bacterium averaging 10mm **gigantic**
millions of times larger than your everyday bacteria
        it does good things to the soil
from our POV
It can’t be cruel
Elvis did not croon
        with Thiomargarita in mind

Really none of this has anything
to do with cruelty
we need an ingredient
the microbial world will never have
        intention.

Deviant knowledge coupled with
selfishness
but
what is selfish microbes
viruses? Dead or alive, neutral opportunistic
a very human perspective

Things seen look swift, brutal and cruel
a larger fish chomping a smaller
frogs spitting out poison beetles
lions mauling antelopes and hyenas
a heron impaling a fish

all species in every direction
pouncing and nibbling
eat or be eaten
it's not to be thought about

I don't see cruelty in microbes
I don't see a world of microbial torture

I muddle and hope for clarity
to ace my chief feature
fear
it immobilizes me
when it has free rein
unnecessary
but omnipresent
not omnipotent

one of our cats is dying of a cruel cancer
it's cruel for her seen from where I sit
she lies flat in the hall
breathing faster
than cat normal

it is cruel for us because we love her
but the cancer the lymphoma
can't be called cruel
it does not even follow
the eat or be eaten
scenario
nothing eats it other than itself
it dies once it's killed its host
cruel fate, cruel disease

would life be less cruel if it ended peaceably
Or not at all?

Is obvious destruction:
        a ruptured dam
        a military invasion
                of very cruel soldiers
raping, pillaging and torturing
and murdering of course,
        are their acts under cover of war
cruel?

A child
whose parents and siblings know is special
more artistic, intelligent, old souled
and outside the pattern
everything for which they cannot pardon her for
sparking abuse and torture
they don't cotton for themselves

to return that errant soul
to normalcy
the Jew
to the cross
the Black man and woman
to servility
the child to crushed and mute
acceptance

My body lets me know
when a cruel thrill is taking over
a rictus in the cheeks
a twisted smile to my eyes
and a small lean forward as my hands
go pincer-like
to enact their meddling cruelty

minor stuff but if cruelty is the juice
I have just the instant I need
to plop its urge elsewhere
and enliven a healthier me

big time cruelty from those with power
blaming the poor, expelling the weak
enrolling the ignorant
  is on another scale
still none of this is coming close
to where I feel
I wish to go

this is not reaching
that 85% of nothingness
from which of course
everything emerges

I wonder about sound
right here the noise
we associate with states
of silence in cruelty

when it all started
that initial big bang of cruelty
officially disguised
as the real one
whose joy was smothered
deliberately
in this act of mis-creation
a massive vomit of Schadenfreude
from God?
Too simple,
puts cruelty on a pinnacle
so

did cruelty slither in with Lucifer's
        I will not serve?
God's finest
understood the role
It had been given
        unlimited Free Will
and other tasty tidbits such as
inventing judgment as It went along
but
It honed Its genius in entrapment
in feeding mortals hope
the way French farmers force-feed geese
and ducks
to make foie gras
fattening our hope-livers
 while the bathysphere of hope
descends us through the abyss
and has us step outside
where the pressure per square centimeter
crushes us to tinfoil

reality is non-negotiable
but there are so many good things
        you will say
yes
I'm not trying to rid the world of anything
just angling for a grip
on cruelty
so goes my fear
        it contracts
and births at least one form of nastiness
cruelty from acts of precipitation
brusque impatience
cortisol induced brute-being
wanting to be quick and free of it
kindness is not well done
        in acceleration

I suspect I wish to expel
the germ of cruelty
from my innards
is it then an infection
to the world?

I see the rush of water
an immense wildwater flowing
called the current
of life
and in it
a human adjunct
an unnatural flow
grafted into the gorgeous maelstrom

a putrid orange-yellow
rivulet
of deliberate derangement
and abuse
the meander of cruelty
unnecessary but ingrained to a point
of finality

It's in Les Liaisons Dangereuses
it's solvent in literature, film
can be shown on a canvas
on a face
through a smirk
but cannot be memorialized
no?

There are no fossil specimens
archeological signposts
however
a great many social conventions
from corsets to ripping out the heart
of your prisoners
and offering them to Huitzilopochtli
the Mexica hummingbird God of the Sun
and war
seem cruel, senselessly cruel
sang Lou Reed about the girls
who mistreated him in adolescence
        is there a sensibly cruel way to be?

Am I getting closer
to the townhouse of cruelty
the isle it inhabits
its portion of antimatter
bringing it close to violence
as something easier to identify
        but it's broader than that

a savory spice you add to the brew
that wafts above
still recognizable
throughout the cooking
saffron turmeric rose cumin
or ras el hanout
that combines them all
something that comes after
showing you cannot pull away
a path arises
        deal artfully
and kindly
with whatever displeases you.

Is it a form of negligence
when you succumb to the parade
of baser instincts
ever ready to wave your flag

this morning
a handle to the word appeared
        cruelty is deliberately getting in the way
of someone else's happiness

we have a good feel for what
disturbs anyone else
above all those we know
and a glance, a remark
a deceleration in what we're doing
knowingly impacting the other
is a common and insidious show
of the laziness
with which we treat life
and the disrespect we show for it
        in others
especially those we pretend
to love
fed in annoyance, sarcasm,
and other ill embodied
sentiment

cruelty is ours to create
it's a spawn of free will
and too much or little time
rather no feel for time at all

my mild definition needs amplification
snuff someone's joy
you free yourself
from being close to
yourself
your existence as a burden
bleat it
dump it
cruelty as gleeful release
from me
I've come closer to a glimpse
of cruelty I'm on the lookout for
dawn sunbeams sparkle dew drops
in the ferns
a veil of protection
against my exercising
cruelty
it won't be any sturdier than that.